

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: Yoshinori NAKAYAMA
Application No.: Continuation of 09/379,104, Filed August 23, 1999
Filing Date: June 14, 2001
Title: SCHEDULE RETRIEVAL METHOD FOR CONTROLLING
SCHEDULES AND SCHEDULE SERVER APPARATUS WITH
MULTISTAGEOUS IDLE-TIME RETRIEVAL MEANS
Art Unit: 2164
Examiner: N. Nguyen

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner of Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

June 14, 2001

Sir:

Prior to examination, please enter thereto the following Preliminary Amendment.

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification as follows:

Page 1, following the title, please insert the following paragraph:

-- Cross-Reference to Related Application

This application is a Continuation of Application Number 09/379,104, filed August 23, 1999, which is a Continuation of Application Number 08/931,655 filed September 16, 1997, which is incorporated herein by reference.--

line 11, insert -- the number -- after "reduce" and change "extremely"
to -- much --;

line 21, insert -- the number -- after "reduce";

line 22, change "extremely" to -- much --;

Page 6, line 9, change "for" to -- by --;

line 10, change "for" to -- by --;

line 20, insert -- 101 and 102 -- after "apparatuses";

Page 7, line 25, delete "a" (both occurrences);

line 27, delete "the" (first occurrence), and change "in the specific
example of" to -- as shown in --;

Page 8, line 11, insert -- as shown in FIG. 4 -- after "401";

line 17, delete "the";

line 18, delete "the";

line 26, delete "a" at the first occurrence;

Page 9, line 1, delete "the";

line 2, delete "the";

line 3, delete "a";

line 10, delete "the"; and

Page 13, line 6, change "extremely" to -- significantly --.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-5 without prejudice or disclaimer, and add claims 6-8, as follows:

1 --6. A scheduling management system, comprising:
2 a schedule server which stores schedules of participants and schedules of equipments
3 reserved by ones of said participants in different groups; and
4 a plurality of remote client devices operatively connected to said schedule server,
5 which allow client users to input schedules of said participants and request an idle time
6 retrieval from said schedule server, and continuously request the idle time retrieval for a
7 special group with a new retrieval condition, which is a previous idle time retrieval result.

1 7. The schedule management system according to Claim 6, wherein said
2 schedule server comprises a communication controller which provides registration for a
3 special group, and wherein said idle time is retrieved so that at least one of participants and
4 equipments in said special group satisfies a retrieval condition for retrieving said idle time.

1 8. The schedule management system according to Claim 6, wherein said
2 schedule server comprises a data access unit which accesses selected databases in accordance
3 with instructions for retrieving the idle time common from said plurality of groups.--

REMARKS

Claims 6-8 are pending in this application. Claims 1-5 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, while claims 6-8 have been added in accordance with current Office policy, to further and alternatively define Applicants' disclosed invention and to assist the Examiner to expedite compact prosecution of the instant application.

Claims 6-8 are believed to be allowable over all prior art of record, including Hotaling et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,124,912 for reasons that independent claim 6 has been

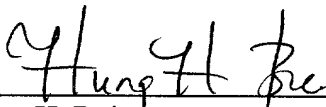
rewritten to include novel features such as the ability of "remote client devices" to "continuously request the idle time retrieval for a special group with a new retrieval condition, which is a previous idle time retrieval result" which are not described anywhere in Hotaling '912 or any other prior art references cited of record.

In view of the foregoing additions and remarks, all claims are deemed in condition for examination and allowance. Should any questions remain unresolved, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicants' attorney at (703) 312-6600.

No fee is incurred by the addition of claims 6-8. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (500.35669CC2).

Respectfully submitted,

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